
Introduced by Senator Liu
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Stone)
(Coauthors: Senators Beall and Block)

June 9, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 128—Relative to California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 128, as introduced, Liu. California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

This measure would designate the month of November 2014 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month and would recognize the need for individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments, and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless youth in California.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth are young people
2 between 12 and 24 years of age who have the least access to
3 essential opportunities and supports; and
4 WHEREAS, The prevalence of runaways and homelessness
5 among youth is staggering, with studies suggesting that nationally
6 between 1.6 and 1.8 million youth up to 24 years of age experience
7 homelessness every year, of which a disproportionate number are
8 gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender; and
9 WHEREAS, Based on national surveys and California's youth
10 population, an estimated 200,000 youth under 18 years of age, and
11 thousands more who are 18 to 24 years of age, are homeless for
12 one or more days each year; and

1 WHEREAS, The State Department of Education has indicated
2 in a recent report required by the federal McKinney-Vento
3 Homeless Assistance Act that during the 2012–13 school year, a
4 total of 259,656 youth, including unaccompanied youth and youth
5 with their families who lack stable housing, in kindergarten and
6 grades 1 to 12, inclusive, experienced homelessness at least one
7 day out of the year, which is an increase of 18 percent over the
8 previous academic year; and

9 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of runaway and
10 homeless youth have been expelled from their homes by their
11 families; physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at home;
12 discharged from foster care and other state custodial systems
13 without adequate transition plans; separated from their parents by
14 death or divorce; too poor to secure their own basic needs; and
15 ineligible or unable to access adequate medical or mental health
16 resources; and

17 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth who live on the
18 street are victims of physical abuse, sexual exploitation, and crime
19 in untold numbers; and

20 WHEREAS, These youths are on the street because they feel
21 there are no other options open to them; and

22 WHEREAS, Youths who “age out” of the foster care system
23 are at an increased risk of homelessness, and represent an estimated
24 20 percent of the 20,000 youth who leave foster care and are
25 currently homeless; and

26 WHEREAS, Providing safe, stable, and permanent housing for
27 runaway and homeless youth is a family, community, state, and
28 national priority; and

29 WHEREAS, The future well-being of our state depends on the
30 value we place on our youth, and, in particular, on our actions to
31 provide the most vulnerable young people in the state with
32 opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities they
33 need to find and maintain stable housing and develop into healthy
34 and productive adults; and

35 WHEREAS, The number of effective programs providing
36 services and support to runaway and homeless youth in California
37 is a fraction of what is needed to fully address the needs of these
38 young people, as only 20 of California’s 58 counties have programs
39 for runaway and homeless youth; and

1 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth has operated
2 the California Youth Crisis Line (1-800-843-5200), 24 hours a
3 day, seven days a week, for over 25 years as the state's only
4 emergency response system for youth in crisis; and

5 WHEREAS, November is National Runaway and Homeless
6 Youth Awareness Month; and

7 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth, along with
8 other community-based organizations, providers, and advocates,
9 is sponsoring the fourth annual California Runaway and Homeless
10 Youth Month to increase awareness and action on behalf of youth
11 who are at risk or currently living on the street; and

12 WHEREAS, Awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness
13 and its causes must be heightened to ensure greater support for
14 effective programs aimed at preventing homelessness and helping
15 youth remain off the streets; now, therefore, be it

16 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
17 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the need for
18 individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments,
19 and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless
20 youth in California; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby designates the month of
22 November 2014 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth
23 Month; and be it further

24 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
25 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.